

Article

Last Journey to America: Deportation of Dosan Ahn Chang Ho (1924-1926)

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Introduction

According to Hyung-chan Kim (1996, xv), an author of *Tosan Ahn Chang-Ho: A Profile of a Prophetic Patriot*, “Ahn Chang Ho was a towering historic figure who dwarfs in significance most Korean nationalists involved in the development of modern Korean nationalism during the period of Japanese colonial domination over Korea that spanned the five decades between 1895 and 1945.” A renowned Korean philosopher and educator, Ahn Pyeong-uk, described Dosan Ahn Chang Ho as a great patriot, educator, philosopher, pioneer, and leader of the Korean independence movement (qtd. in *ibid.* Forward). Dosan Ahn Chang Ho is a well respected pioneer and leader of the early Korean immigrant community. Comparable to Gandhi of India and Sun Yat-sen of China, Ahn Chang Ho was an ethico-spiritual leader and republican revolutionary. As a revolutionary-democrat, Ahn Chang Ho not only championed constitutional democracy but also led the efforts for the war of independence (Pak 1999).

Ahn’s legacy continues today as many Koreans around the world respect and admire his dedication, sacrifice, and love for country. His efforts and actions in his own life paint a picture of a man true to his word and convictions. He gave his life to transform Korea. During an interrogation by Japanese police, Ahn replied “Yes, I regard the very act of eating an act on behalf of independence and the very act of sleeping an act on behalf of independence. Until this body is destroyed I will never be any different.” More importantly, Ahn Chang Ho was an American pioneer who was influenced by Christianity and pragmatism. His conversion to Christianity made him realize the need to make his commitment to strong personal morality, the virtue in working for desired objectives, and the values of service to others. With his newly found pioneer spirit, Dosan organized, educated, and mobilized Korean immigrants in the United States. He told Korean immigrants to become good citizens with a sense of civic responsibility to both America and Korea. Ahn Chang Ho’s influence and legacy goes well beyond Korea. He believed and practiced universal values of honesty, trust, praxis, and bravery. One of his most famous quotes is, “I shall never lie, and only the one with honesty can truly win at the

* For the transliteration of the pen name of Ahn Chang Ho (McCune-Reischauer: Tosan; Revised Romanization: Dosan), I basically follow the Revised Romanization convention. However, the citations in the text could include the McCune-Reischauer system spellings.

end.” He believed that dishonesty was a sin.

Dosan travelled extensively to China, Russia, Europe, Mexico, Australia, Canada, and America three times for the independence of Korea. Ahn Chang Ho first came to America in 1902 with his wife, Hyeryun (Helen) and stayed until early 1907. Dosan returned to America in September 1911 and stayed until 1919. Dosan’s third and final trip to America was between 1924 and 1926. The purpose of this paper is to retrace Dosan’s final journey to America and to investigate why and how he was deported from the United States to Australia in 1926. Dosan Ahn Chang Ho, Heungsadan, and the Korean National Association were accused as Bolshevist organizations by Kong Wong and Charles Hong Lee who sent a letter to the Immigration Office in 1924. The Immigration Office immediately launched investigations of Ahn Chang Ho and the organizations he established. Although Ahn Chang Ho was allowed to extend his stay in America for an additional 6 months, he was deported by the Immigration Office in March 1926. On June 3, 1925, Dosan Ahn Chang Ho was interrogated by the Immigration Service in Chicago to investigate if he was a Bolshevist or not. Although Dosan’s visa extension request was approved, the Immigration Office did not trust him and decided to deport him in 1926. Based on newly discovered Immigration Service documents and *Sinhan minbo* articles, this paper firmly concludes that Dosan Ahn Chang Ho was deported by the U.S. Immigration Service in 1926 and that he was never allowed to be reunited with his family in America. Ralph Ahn, the youngest son of Doan Ahn Chang Ho, has never seen his father as Dosan left San Francisco on March 2, 1926, while his wife Helen was pregnant. Ahn was arrested by the Japanese police in 1932 in Shanghai and died in 1938 due to harsh imprisonment and torture. Dosan Ahn Chang Ho’s last journey begins with a letter sent by Kong Wong and Charles Hong Lee accusing him of being a Bolshevist.

Dosan Ahn Chang Ho: Bolshevist?

The Immigration Service in San Francisco received a letter written by Kong Wong and Charles Hong Lee on December 15, 1924.¹ According to the letter,

1. Although *Weekly Chosun* (September 15, 2002) reported discovery of immigration file on Dosan Ahn Chang Ho, it was not known to author or most people in Korea. *Yonhap News* and other Korean

Dosan Ahn Chang Ho was scheduled to arrive in San Francisco the next day, December 16, 1926. It was written on Arlington Hotel stationery, Santa Barbara that “Dear Sir—Hereby I enclosed photo of Bolshevist leader your office look out for him. Understand his coming via Honolulu with few days to your harbor.” It accuses Dosan Ahn Chang Ho and Heungsadan (Young Korean Academy) as a Bolshevist and urge Immigration Service to send him back to China.² On December 24, 1925, U.S. Department of Labor Immigration Service officially launched investigation of charge against Ahn Chang Ho: “You will note that AHN CHANG HO was admitted as a Section 6 traveler under the Exclusion Law and under section 3, Subdivision 2 (alien visiting the United States temporarily as tourist), of the Immigration Act of 1924; that he expressed an intention at the office of America Consul in Shanghai of remaining in the United States for a period approximately eight months and that his object in coming to this country was to visit his wife and children in Los Angeles, their address being given as 106 N. Figueroa St., your city. Subsequent to the admission of the applicant we received the letter which you will find enclosed from one Kong Wong, alias Charles Hong Lee (or possibly these two names represent two different persons), written in Santa Barbara, Cal., the date of which is not given but which letter was received here on Dec. 15, 1924 and it was too late to be given consideration in the disposition of this case. The information given in the letter may or may not be authentic but it would seem as the same should be given attention in the hearing conducted in your district.”³ Since this letter was received one day before Dosan arrived in San Francisco, Immigration Service was unable to process it timely manner. However, this document makes clear that this investigation was launched because of letter sent by Kong Wong and/or Charles Hong Lee. It also raises question of the purpose of his visit to the United States. In his application, Ahn Chang Ho expressed the purpose of his visit was to visit his wife and children in Los Angeles. When Dosan Ahn Chang Ho travelled extensively throughout the

media wrongly reported that I discovered immigration file on Dosan Ahn Chang Ho.

2. See Appendix 1.

3. U.S. Department of Labor, Immigration Service, Office of the Commissioner Angel Island Station Via Ferry Post Office, December 24, 1924. Document No. 238880/1-6. Investigation Arrival Case Files, San Francisco, Records of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, RG 85, National Archives, Pacific Region, San Bruno, Ca. All Immigration Service documents in this paper are referred to this source.

United States, it raised suspicion by Immigration Inspector as the purpose of his visit to the United States was different what he initially stated.

Immigration Service tried to locate Dosan Ahn Chang Ho's whereabouts, however, he travelled to East extensively during this time and they were unable to track him down. Immigration Service Chicago Office dated April 28, 1925 noted that Ahn Chang Ho is travelling to East currently and scheduled to return within thirty days. It shows that Immigration Service has been trying to locate Ahn Chang Ho, but unable to find him.⁴ On May 8, 1925, Immigration Service in San Francisco send a notice to Los Angeles office to locate Dosan Ahn Chang Ho and inform San Francisco office immediately.⁵ Immigration Service Office of District Director in Los Angeles made an effort to locate the writer of the Santa Barbara letter, but no information was found.⁶ I also tried to search for identity of Charles Hong Lee, but could not locate him. I was able to locate the name Chai Hong Lee who came to the U.S. as a foreign student in 1923 to attend at Hastings College.⁷ However, I could not positively identify Chai Hong Lee is Charles Hong Lee.⁸

On June 3, 1925, Dosan Ahn Chang Ho was interrogated by Immigrant Inspector J. B. Brekke in Chicago office.⁹ Ahn Chang Ho was asked "are you interested in the Soviet Government of Russia" and Ahn answered no. Inspector also asked if "Ahn advocated radical changes in the Government of the United

4. U.S. Department of Labor, Immigration Service, Office of Inspector in Chicago, Ill. April 28, 1925. Document No. 2008/967.

5. U.S. Department of Labor, Immigration Service, Office of the Commissioner Angel Island Station Via Ferry Post Office, May 8, 1925. Document No. 238880/1-6.

6. U.S. Department of Labor, Immigration Service, Office of District Director Los Angeles, Calif. May 11, 1925. Document No. 25140/24.

7. According to *Dong-A ilbo* (June 14, 1923) report, he left Korea his hometown Masan, Korea on June 26 to study in the United States for seven years.

8. Neither Chai Hong Lee's transcript (attached) nor Hastings College yearbooks indicate he graduated. In yearbooks, he is always listed as a special student. For the '23/'24, '24/'25, and '25/'26 academic years, he was an active member of Eta Phi Lambda, a local organization similar to a Greek fraternity without houses. At the time, Dr. Hayes Fuhr, Chair of the Hastings College Music Conservatory, and Dr. Frank Weyer, Dean of the College, served as advisors. The other special student from Korea was Wang Sun Yun. Unfortunately, he died in 1926 of what a later account lists as pneumonia. His father, Tchi O Yun, was the former minister of education in Korea, and his mother was of royal extraction. Accounts note he was very well-liked and respected on campus and in the community of Hastings. Mr. Yun is buried in Hastings' Parkview Cemetery. A 1937 newspaper account indicates Mr. Yun's brother, Dr. Ilsun S. Yun, visited the grave site. Dr. Yun is noted "Professor of Pathology at a Korea university."

9. See Appendix 2.

States.” Ahn answered “never.” Three days later on June 6, Immigration Service Chicago Office sent three copies of statement made by Ahn Chang Ho to Los Angeles Office.¹⁰ On June 9, 1925, Immigration Service Los Angeles Office returned all relevant documents back to San Francisco Office. Under subject “AHN CHANG HO, Korean, under investigation: Your file No. 23880/1-6 is herewith returned.¹¹ It officially confirms that Ahn Chang Ho was under investigation by Immigration Office if he was affiliated with Bolshevist or not. Ahn Chang Ho applied for extension of temporary stay in the United States and Immigration Office officially launched investigation if he was a radical Bolshevist or not. ‘To date it has not been possible to confirm the allegations set forth in said letter, but we feel that the Bureau should have before it all information available when passing on the pending application.’¹² Finally, Ahn Chang Ho’s temporary stay extension application was approved by Bureau of Immigration, Washington on July 11, 1925.¹³ Immigration Service San Francisco Office sent official approval letter to Ahn Chang Ho’s 106 North Figueroa address on July 22, 1925. The letter stated that ‘your temporary admission has been extended for a period of six months from Aug. 16, 1925. Please be guided accordingly.’¹⁴ Ahn Chang Ho sent ‘thank you’ letter on Young Korean Academy stationary to Immigration Service San Francisco on August 6, 1925 that ‘I wish to express my sincere appreciation for your kind and prompt consideration of it. It is nevertheless my regret that your letter could not reach me any sooner on account of my trip to the East. Consequently, I am in delay of extending these few lines of appreciation.’”

Hyung-chan Kim also wrote about investigation on Heungsadan (Young Korean Academy) by U.S. authorities. However, he did not know why and how investigation was launched: “In the absence of any document it is difficult to ascertain who or what was responsible for informing the U.S.

10. U.S. Department of Labor, Immigration Service, Office of Inspector in Chicago, Ill. June 6, 1925. Document No. 2008/967.

11. U.S. Department of Labor, Immigration Service, Office of District Director Los Angeles, Calif. June 9, 1925. Document No. 2008/967.

12. U.S. Department of Labor, Immigration Service, Office of the Commissioner Angel Island Station Via Ferry Post Office, June 26, 1925. Document No. 12025/02.

13. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Immigration, Washington. July 11, 1925. Document No. 55466/466.

14. U.S. Department of Labor, Immigration Service, Office of the Commissioner Angel Island Station Via Ferry Post Office July 22, 1925. Document No. 23880/1-6.

immigration authorities of the Heungsadan activities” (Kim 1996, 225). We do know for sure that letter sent by Kong Wong and/or Charles Hong Lee triggered an official investigation. Immigration Office tried to locate identity of Kong Wong and/or Charles Hong Lee, which was unsuccessful. I also tried to identify Kong Wong and/or Charles Hong Lee, but I could not find him. It is also noteworthy that the letter not only accused Ahn Chang Ho of being Bolshevik but also Heungsadan and Korean National Association. I can only assume that Kong Wong and/or Charles Hong Lee is a supporter of Syngman Rhee who established Dongjihoe (Comrade Association) in 1921.¹⁵ Comrade Association and Korean National Association was competing for membership and organizational influence throughout the United States at the time. It is logical to assume that Comrade Association tried to block return of Dosan Ahn Chang Ho to the United States in order to limit influence of Korean National Association and Young Korean Academy. Others also have noted of false accusation of Dosan Ahn Chang Ho as socialist or communist. Hyung-chan Kim (1996, 212) also mentioned conversation between Kwak Nim-tae and Philip Jaisohn: “according to Jaisohn, Tosan had been denied a U.S. visa to return to the United States in 1924, because a Korean leader stationed in Washington, D.C. had accused Tosan of being a Communist. Kwak asked Jaisohn who such a person could be, and Jaisohn responded to him almost in anger, ‘You mean you don’t know who that leader is?’ Kwak thought that Jaisohn implicated Syngman Rhee.” Kim also cited another source to corroborate this story that “according to Kim Hyeon-gu, Syngman Rhee reported to the U.S. intelligence authorities that Ahn Chang-ho, Pak Yong-man and Kimm Kiusic were radical communists.” Syngman Rhee claimed that he did so out of his loyalty to America where he was allowed to live and that he was proud of what he had done.¹⁶ If these stories are accurate, Syngman Rhee did not hesitate to accuse his opposition leaders like Ahn Chang Ho, Pak Yong-man, and Kimm Kiusic as communists. It is almost certain that Kong Wong and/or Charles Hong Lee is (are) followers of Syngman Rhee or Syngman Rhee

15. The *Korean Pacific Magazine* reported possible arrival of Dosan Ahn Chang Ho on March 1923 issue. According to this report, contrary to the rumor, Syngman Rhee is helping Ahn Chang Ho’s arrival in America. On October 1924, the *Korean Pacific Magazine* reported two op-ed critical of *Sinhan minbo*. In addition, the *Korean Pacific Magazine* (July 1925) printed op-ed critical of “Communism” and too early to embrace Communist ideology.

16. See Kim 1996, 212n21; Ko 1995, 169.

himself. However, the *Korean Pacific Magazine* (July 1925) issued a statement that “Ahn Chang Ho is not a Communist.” It is also interesting to mention that the *Korean Pacific Magazine* published several articles relating to Ahn Chang Ho and Communism in March 1923 issue: 1) Ahn Chang Ho elected as the president of “People Representative Convention,” 2) Communists are gaining popularity but we must consider if Communism is helpful for independence movement, and 3) Ahn Chang Ho is planning to leave for the United States. Syngman Rhee is helping Ahn Chang Ho’s trip to the United States contrary to the rumor. These reports suggest that Dongjihoe and Syngman Rhee was aware of rumor that Syngman Rhee is trying to stop Ahn Chang Ho’s planned travel to the United States.

In addition, “it was claimed by Kim San that Tosan was arrested in 1924 for communist books he kept in his Los Angeles home” (Wales and Kim 1941, 120; qtd. in Kim 1996, 225), and in Dosan’s letter of June 24, 1925 he told his wife that he was investigated by U.S. authorities who came to visit with him at Heungsadan headquarters office, because someone had informed them that Dosan was a Communist (Kim 1996, 225). Since an official investigation of Dosan Ahn Chang Ho began December 24, 1924, it is highly unlikely that Dosan was arrested for possession of communist books in 1924. According to Immigration Office documents, investigators began looking for Dosan Ahn Chang Ho spring of 1925. They visited Heungsadan building (106 North Figueroa Street) to investigate, but were unable to locate him when Dosan travelled to East. Finally, Immigration Office tracked him down and interrogated him on June 3, 1925 in Chicago office. It is also noteworthy to correct that Dosan was not denied visa to enter the United States in 1924 as claimed by Philip Jaisohn instead he was allowed to enter but forced to leave the United States in March 1926.

While visiting Chicago, Ahn Chang Ho continued to meet with students and Korean immigrants in mid-west communities. For example, *Sinhan minbo* (July 16, 1925) reported that “according to a Korean student at Chicago University, Dosan Ahn Chang Ho travelled several places and planning to depart Chicago on 8th to visit Detroit, Cleveland, South Bend, and Kansas City. Ahn Chang Ho was forced to stop planned trip to East and returned to San Francisco in late July 1925.” *Sinhan minbo* (July 30, 1925) reported that “after visiting several Korean communities in East, Dosan Ahn Chang Ho safely returned to San Francisco. Initially, Ahn planned to visit as many places

as possible, however, he regrets that he was forced to stop and return to West for two reasons: 1) he had not secure temporary stay extension permission from the State Department, 2) he ran out of funding, thus, unable to continue travel to East. Ahn expressed deep regret for not visiting several places to meet with students and immigrants.” Ahn expressed his regret in a letter he sent to the Immigration Service dated August 6, 1925 that “It is nevertheless my regret that your letter could not reach me any sooner on account of my trip to the East.”¹⁷

In the meantime, Immigration Service continued its own investigation of Ahn Chang Ho. Director of Immigration Office in Chicago, Howard D. Ebey, sent entire Ahn Chang Ho investigation files to Los Angeles District Director of Immigration dated June 6, 1925: “Referring to your letter of April 23, 1925, No. 25140/24. Relating to AHN CHANG HO, I am returning herewith San Francisco file No. 23880/1-6 and enclose three copies of statement made by Ahn Chang Ho at this office.”¹⁸ Three days later on June 9, 1925, Office of District Director Los Angeles, Calif., Assistant district Director sent all files to Commissioner of Immigration in San Francisco under the subject heading “AHN CHANG HO, Korean, under investigation.” It reads as follows: “Referring to your communication of the 8th ultimo, there is herewith enclosed, in duplicate, transcript of the examination of this alien conducted by Inspector Brekke at Chicago, Illinois, on the 3rd instant. Your file No. 23880/1-6 is herewith returned.” It means that they finished official investigation of Ahn Chang Ho and were waiting for a final decision. On June 24, 1925, U.S. Department of Labor Immigration Service filled out Ahn Chang Ho’s “Certificate of Admission of Alien” form: “I hereby certify that the following is a correct record and statement of facts relative to the admission to the United States of the alien named below: it includes basic information on Ahn Chang Ho’s date of arrival, vassal name, age, occupation, marital status, etc.” Interestingly Ahn’s race is recorded as “Chinese.” Since Ahn arrived with a Chinese passport, perhaps Ahn was legally a Chinese citizen.

On June 26, 1925, Immigration Service District No. 30, Office of the Commissioner Angel Island Station via Ferry Post Office San Francisco wrote general letter on current state of Ahn Chang Ho investigation: “The applicant’s

17. Thank you letter sent by Ahn Chang Ho to Immigration Service San Francisco, August 6, 1925.

18. U.S. Department of Labor Immigration Service Office of District Director Chicago, ILL. June 16, 1925. Document No. 2008/967.

travel in the United States has been extensive, the purpose therefore as claimed by him entirely different from that alleged in letter signed Kong Wong and Charles Long Lee, without date, received at this office on Dec. 15, 1924, or several days after the alien was admitted. To date it has not been possible to confirm the allegations set forth in said letter, but we feel that the Bureau should have before it all information available when passing on the pending application. The file attached should be returned after it has served its purpose.” This document suggests that allegation against Ahn Chang Ho by Kong Wong and/or Charles Hong Lee could not be verified nor credible. Finally, Bureau of Immigration Washington issued visa extension approval letter dated July 11, 1925: “With reference to your letter the 26th ultimo, No. 12025/02, you are advised that the Department has directed the temporary admission of Ahn Chang Ho be extended for a period of six months from the date of expiration of the eight months which have heretofore been granted him. The file forwarded by your office is returned herewith.”¹⁹ Therefore, Ahn Chang Ho could stay in the United State until February 16, 1926 since he was officially admitted on December 16, 1924. Immigration Service Office of the Commissioner Angel Island Station sent an official letter of visa extension letter to Ahn Chang Ho dated July 22, 1925. Ahn Chang Ho sent a “thank you” letter on Young Korean Academy stationery on August 6, 1925. Ahn hinted that he had to halt his trip to East because he did not receive visa extension letter late: “It is nevertheless my regret that your letter could not reach me any sooner on account of my trip to the East. Consequently I am in delay of extending these few lines of appreciation.”²⁰

After receiving temporary stay extension letter from Immigration Service, Ahn continued to visit and meet with students and Korean immigrants, however, he mostly stayed in California between August of 1925 and March of 1926 (Kim 1996, 214). *Sinhan minbo* (November 12, 1925) reported that “Dosan Ahn Chang Ho is visiting Dinuba and Taft (California) and will arrive in San Francisco soon.” According to Hyung-chan Kim (ibid. 215), Ahn Chang Ho was refused service at a hot springs when he was visiting Stockton,

19. U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Immigration Washington document No. 55466/466, July 11, 1925.

20. It confirms *Sinhan Minbo* report dated July 30, 1925 that he was forced to halt his travel to East because he could not secure visa extension on time.

Taft, and Chico.²¹ In California, anti-Asian sentiment was still very high and Asian immigrants often faced overt racial discrimination. It was very common for restaurants not to serve Asian American customers—signs often read “No Dog or Chinese Allowed.”²² Dosan Ahn Chang Ho visited Taft again in February 1926.

Deportation

By early 1926, Ahn was preparing to return to China as his visa extension was expiring soon. He initially planned to visit the Korean community in Hawaii for two weeks before returning to China. It appears that the Immigration Office was unsure if Ahn Chang Ho was a Bolshevik or not. What was clear, however, that the Immigration Office was determined to deport Ahn Chang Ho as his extension visa expired. The Immigration Office of the Commissioner Angel Island Station prepared a document to ensure Ahn Chang Ho's departure from the United States: “There are attached all papers relating to the alien AHN CHANG HO, in order that you may arrange to have his sailing for Australia witnessed. As he stated, verbally, that he would leave for February 23 or 24 by S. S. ‘Sonoma’ by Union Steamship Company, it is uncertain whether he meant by S. S. ‘Sonoma’ February 23, 1926, Oceanic Steamship Co. or s. s. ‘Makura,’ Feb. 24, 1926, Union Steamship Co.”²³ In February, the Immigration Office in Angel Island certified that Ahn Chang Ho boarded S. S. Sonoma and departed from San Francisco: “I hereby certify that I this day checked out on the S. S. Sonoma, a certain Chinese named ‘AHN CHANG HO’ and identified him by his photograph on his certificate which with file is hereto enclosed.”²⁴ However, the same document shows “checked out on the S. S. Sonoma March 2, 1926.” This vessel sailed from this port February 23, 1926 and returned for repairs. According to Hyung-chan Kim (1996, 215-25), “In San Pedro, near Los Angeles, Tosan went aboard the S. S. Sonoma that carried him towards Hawaii, but it developed propeller trouble during the voyage and was forced to

21. Cited from Dosan's letter to Helen on November 16, 1925.

22. More on anti-Asian discrimination see Takaki 1998.

23. U.S. Department of Labor, Immigration Service, Office of the Commissioner Angel Island Station Via Ferry Post Office February 6, 1926. Document No. 12025/14120.

24. U.S. Department of Labor, Immigration Service, Office of the Commissioner Angel Island Station Via Ferry Post Office February 23, 1926. Document No. 12025/14120.

return to San Francisco for repair.” Obviously, Ahn Chang Ho did not depart from San Pedro as described by Hyung-chan Kim. *Sinhan minbo* (February 25, 1926) report of “Ahn Dosan Farewell Party” also corroborated Immigration Office document. According to this report, “Ahn’s Farewell Party was held at Korean church in San Francisco on evening of 22nd.” Ahn urged fellow Korean Americans to their best to achieve independence of Korea. In addition, he thanked everyone who attended his farewell party in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Stockton. According to boarding record of Ahn Chang Ho (March 2, 1926), Ahn received permission to board on February 20, 1926 in San Francisco. Therefore, we can safely conclude that Ahn boarded S. S. Sonoma on February 23, 1926 from San Francisco but S. S. Sonoma was forced to return to San Francisco because of propeller malfunction. S. S. Sonoma was repaired and departed from San Francisco on March 2, 1926.

Mrs. Ahn initially wanted to come to San Francisco to send him off to China on February 23, 1926. But Dosan Ahn Chang Ho urged her to stay home and she did not travel to San Francisco. However, when she heard the news that S. S. Sonoma returned to San Francisco for ship repair, she decided to visit San Francisco on March 2 to send him off. According to *Sinhan minbo* (March 4, 1926), she said “Please be safe, please be safe” (*Pyeonani gasipsiyo, pyeonani gasipsiyo*) as S. S. Sonoma began sailing from port of San Francisco. It was a final good-bye as Dosan Ahn Chang Ho never returned to the United States to see his wife and children. S. S. Sonoma arrived in Honolulu, Hawaii on March 8, 1926. Dosan Ahn Chang Ho planned to stay in Hawaii for two weeks to meet with Korean American community members and depart for China. However, he was not allowed to stay in Hawaii and forced to depart for Australia. According to Hyung-chan Kim (1996), Dosan never planned to go to Australia but “Immigration Office told Dosan that he will not be allowed to stay in Hawaii because Young Korean Academy is bad organization.” Hyung-chan Kim (ibid. 225) noted that he does not know why Immigration Office told Dosan of such due to lack of documentation. We know for sure that accusation letter sent by Kong Wong and/or Charles Hong Lee opened investigation of Dosan Ahn Chang Ho and Young Korean Academy. *Sinhan minbo* (March 25, 1925) also reported that “Dosan Ahn Chang Ho arrived Honolulu, Hawaii on 8th around 4 p.m. and Korean American community planned welcome party. Initially, Dosan Ahn Chang Ho wanted to stay in Hawaii for two weeks, but Immigration Office did not allow it and he was

forced to leave the same evening. Dosan Ahn Chang Ho stayed in Honolulu, Hawaii only for 6 hours and briefly gave a speech to about 150 Koreans who hastily attended his farewell party. Around 10 p.m. Dosan Ahn Chang Ho left Honolulu, Hawaii.” According to S. S. Sonoma boarding record, “[he] continued journey on Sonoma to Australia.”²⁵ It clearly shows that Immigration Office wanted to make sure to send Dosan Ahn Chang Ho off to Australia on S. S. Sonoma as investigation on him was inconclusive. Immigration Office was unable to verify “Bolshevist” allegation against Dosan Ahn Chang Ho and they chose to be “safe” by deporting him off to Australia.

Dosan Ahn Chang Ho arrived in Australia on March 25, 1926. Dosan felt warmth and less discrimination than Immigration bureaucrats in the United States as Australian officials allowed him to land without strict enforcement of law.²⁶ According to the same *Sinhan minbo* report, Dosan planned to depart on (April) 14th and arrive China around 26th. It is uncertain when Dosan Ahn Chang Ho arrived in Shanghai, but it appears he arrived around May 22, 1926. According to *Sinhan minbo* report (June 25, 1926), “Welcoming ceremony was held on May 22, 1926 as Korean community in Shanghai was glad to welcome Dosan Ahn Chang Ho. Dosan spent two weeks in Shanghai to take care of issues relating to Provisional Government.” When Dosan arrived in Shanghai, Provisional Government was in organizational disarray due to a number of events that had transpired since his departure from China in November 1924 (Kim 1996, 226). Dosan Ahn Chang Ho held optimistic view of the development of model community project and began searching for ideal site. He travelled to Nanjing, Beijing, Manchuria, and even Philippines in search of ideal site for model community project. Dosan determined that Manchuria was not a suitable place for his model community project as he and several Korean leaders were detained by Chinese police in 1927. In 1929, Dosan decided to visit Philippines to check out feasibility of developing model community project.²⁷ Dosan stayed in Philippines around 50 days and decided to return to China as he did not want to pose a financial burden on Korean residents in the Philippines. Dosan abandoned idea of bringing Korean immigrants to Philippines when Chief of the Immigration Department of Philippines told

25. S. S. Sonoma boarding record March 2, 1926. Immigration Office file no. 4387/263.

26. *Sinhan minbo*, April 29, 1926.

27. *Sinhan minbo*, February 21, 1929; May 16, 1929; May 23, 1929.

Dosan that Korean immigrants will be accepted if they come on a Japanese passport (ibid. 236). Dosan planned to bring Korean immigrants on a Chinese passport.

Dosan planned to return to the United States to be with his family sometime in 1932. However, he was arrested by French and Japanese police in connection with bombing incident in Hungkou Park by Yun Pong-gil on April 29, 1932. Dosan was turned over to Japanese authorities and sent to Incheon, Korea.²⁸ Dosan was found guilty as charged and sentenced to four years in prison. However, he was released on February 10, 1935 because he was considered a model prisoner. Dosan was imprisoned again on June 28, 1937 and had to endure physical and psychological torture during Japanese police interrogation. When Japanese police asked if he would continue to get involved in Korea's independence movement if he was released. Dosan responded "Yes, I consider eating an act for independence and sleeping also an act for independence. As long as I live, there will be no change in this" (Kim 1996, 267; qtd. in Yi 1930, 6-9). Dosan became gravely ill and was allowed to be released on bail on December 24, 1937. He was immediately hospitalized, but died at the hospital on March 10, 1938.

Conclusion

As S. S. Sonoma sailed from port of San Francisco, Mrs. Ahn said final goodbye to Dosan Ahn Chang Ho, "Please be safe, please be safe" (*Pyeonani gasipsiyo, pyeonani gasipsiyo*) on March 2, 1926. It turned out to be final farewell between Dosan Ahn Chang Ho and his wife Helen Ahn. Dosan Ahn Chang Ho and Heungsadan was accused of being Bolshevik and Socialist organization by Kong Wong and/or Charles Hong Lee. Although I tried hard to search for identity of Kong Wong and/or Charles Hong Lee, I could not find any information on identity of person who sent accusatory letter to Immigration Office. Immigration Office launched an extensive investigation and also tried to find person who sent the letter. However, Immigration Office could not locate identity of the person who sent the letter. Although Immigration

28. According to *Sinhan minbo* (June 30, 1932), Dosan departed from Shanghai on May 30 and would arrive in Incheon port on June 7.

Office approved Ahn's extension request to stay in America for additional six months, cloud of suspicion overshadowed and a final decision was inconclusive. Immigration Office decided to deport Dosan Ahn Chang Ho due to uncertainty. Dosan Ahn Chang Ho's youngest son, Ralph Ahn, never saw his father as Dosan never returned to America to be with his family.

In this paper, I tried to retrace why, how, and for what reasons Dosan Ahn Chang Ho was deported on March 2, 1926 and never to return to America. Immigration Office conducted extensive investigation on Dosan Ahn Chang Ho and Heungsadan after it received accusatory letter from presumably pro-Syngman Rhee person Kong Wong and/or Charles Hong Lee. It is safe to conclude that pro-Syngman Rhee group is responsible for deportation of Dosan Ahn Chang Ho in 1926. Although Dosan Ahn Chang Ho was far from being Bolshevik nor Communist, Dosan Ahn Chang Ho tried to unite Korean community as he embraced socialism. As he faced investigation and eventual deportation based on false "allegation" or "accusation," Dosan Ahn Chang Ho was a Christian, educator, and believer of democratic ideals.

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Appendix 1

[Immigration Superintendent Office, San Francisco, California: 12023, 1924
December 15]

Dear Sir—Hereby I enclosed photo of Bolshevist leader your office looked out for him. Understand his coming via Honolulu with few days to your harbor.

I want to advised your office this is very important proposition for you. Gentlemen better look out for the B. [olshevist] leader. The person name is C. H. Ahn or Chang Ho Ahn who is due in your city within few days he is from Shanghai, China via Honolulu. He was over stop Honolulu thence to your city. The person was in this country number of years and he had family in Los Angeles. But he went China for six years and connected with Bolshevist Government all this years he is coming to U.S. now. Widely or Wisely read Bolshevist policies among the oriental in US also Mexico, the headquarter in your city under name Korean National Association also other one is under name Young Korean Academy in Los Angeles. This man leader of both society and he has over five members in San Francisco and other city through the United States and Mexico and Hawaii.

I hoping that you will have special attention with this matter your officer need not make any investigation with Korean National Association or any other person best the way to sending back to China quite as possible without question him. Probably Korean National Association will take the matter because he is leader their society and responsibility. The person which I mention about by KNA. Do not any further investigation the person sending back where he belong so he can spread more Bolshevist policies.

Yours truly,
Kong Wong and Charles Hong Lee

Appendix 2

Sworn statement of AHN CHANG Ho,

Taken before J. B. Brekke, Imigrant Inspector,
K. Bernard Kim, Interpreter,
Veta J Victor, Stenographer,

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at the United States Immigration Office, 608 So.

Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois, this 3rd day of June, 1925.

Q. What is your name?

A. Ahn Chang Ho.

Q. When did you come to the United States last?

A. Landed here December 16, 1924, at San Francisco.

Q. Under what status were you admitted?

A. I was admitted as a Section 6 Traveler. I have a Section 6 certificate issued by the commissioner of Foreign Affairs at Shanghai, China

Q. How old are you?

A. 47 Years old.

Q. Where were you born?

A. Puyang-Yang, Korea.

Q. Where did you embark?

A. Shanghai.

Q. Had you resided in Shanghai a long time?

A. About 3 years.

Q. What was your occupation in Shanghai?

A. I was one of the members of the Korean Provisional Government.

Q. Are you still a member of that Provisional Government?

A. No.

Q. What is your present status of occupation?

A. Just traveling.

Q. Where have you traveled since you were admitted at San Francisco?

A. From San Francisco I went to Los Angeles, remained there about two months. From Los Angeles I went to Stockton, Sacramento, Dinuba, Reedley, San Diego, Riverside, Baskerville. On my way from California to Chicago I stopped at Denver then came to Chicago. From Chicago I went to Philadelphia and New York, New Haven, Conn., Boston, Mass., Fall Rivers, Washington, D.C. Patterson, N.J., Princeton, then back to New York, then back to Chicago.

Q. What was your object in visiting there different places?

A. For the purpose of a visiting friends and among these friends the majority are students. I visited them on their own request.

Q. Did they request that you just visit them or was it for the purpose of talking to them, making speeches or addresses, or what?

A. I have talked to them both privately and made public addresses among them.

Q. What has been the subject of your addresses?

A. In general I advised them to make a proper preparation for the future freedom and independence of Korea. Among the students I advised them they should work honestly and learn all they can while they had the opportunity and co-operate among the students.

Q. Are you interested in the Soviet Government of Russia?

A. I am not interested directly or indirectly.

Q. Did you talks to the students at their different places in any way involve questions regarding the government of the United States?

A. No.

Q. Are you at all interested in the Government of the United States—that is do you think it is all right as it is or should it be changed in any way.

A. As far as I can see about the American Government, I could find no fault.

Q. In the addresses which you have made did you at any time advocate radical changes in the Government of the United States.

A. Never—I know no reason for it.

Q. Is there an association called the Korean national Association?

A. Yes.

Q. For what purpose was that organized?

A. To help the Koreans to help each other.

Q. Is this Korean National Association at any time endeavoring to influence the policy of the Government of the United States?

A. No.

Q. Have you enemies in the United States that you know of?

A. So far as I know I have no enemies. There might be some Koreans who dislike my activities.

Q. What was your real purpose in coming to the United States this last time?

A. It could be covered in three different ways: First, to see my family; Second, to investigate educational work of this country (For the poor students—so they could work part time and go to school part time) I have always been interested in education work. I had been principal of

schools in Korea; Third, visiting old friends.

Q. What family have you here?

A. Wife, one brother, two sons, and two daughters.

Q. Where are your wife and children at the present time?

A. Los Angeles, 106, Figueroa.

Q. How long do you intend to stay in the United States before returning to Shanghai?

A. Originally I intended to stay for eight months but I would like to stay until next January, providing I get an extension of time granted (I have permission to remain eight months).

Abstract

Dosan Ahn Chang Ho travelled extensively to China, Russia, Europe, Mexico, Australia, and Canada, and three times to America for Korean independence. Ahn Chang Ho first came to America in 1902 with his wife, Hyeryon, also called Helen, and stayed until early 1907. Dosan returned to America in October 1911 and stayed until 1919. Dosan's third and final trip to America was between 1924 and 1926. The purpose of this paper is to retrace Dosan's final journey across the Pacific to America, and to investigate why and how he was deported from the United States to Australia in 1926. It turns out that Dosan Ahn Chang Ho was interrogated by the U.S. Immigration Service in Chicago on June 3, 1925, to investigate if he was a Bolshevik. Although Dosan's visa extension request was approved, the Immigration Office did not trust him and decided to deport him in 1926. Based on U.S. Immigration Service documents and *Sinhan minbo* articles, this paper firmly concludes that the U.S. Immigration Service deported Dosan Ahn Chang Ho in 1926, and he was never allowed to be reunited with his family in America. Ralph Ahn, the youngest son of Dosan Ahn Chang Ho, never met his father, as Dosan left San Francisco on March 2, 1926, while his wife Helen was pregnant. Ahn was arrested by Japanese police in 1932 in Shanghai and died in 1938 due to harsh imprisonment and torture.

Keywords: Ahn Chang Ho, independence movement, Korean National Association, Heungsadan, deportation

